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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5515
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RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6641
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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 6567
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
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RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI
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SUBJECT: SEOUL - MEDIA REACTION

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC: DPRK

"INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SHOULD CONTINUE TO PUT PRESSURE ON NORTH KOREA"

Conservative Dong-a Ilbo editorialized (08/31): "It could be said that North Korea has adopted conciliatory tactics in order to avoid difficulties caused by international pressure, but as shown in its weapons shipment to Iran, North Korea has not fundamentally changed. The way for the North to survive will open up when it gives up the delusion that Pyongyang, while not giving up its nuclear programs, can deceive the international community with conciliatory gestures."

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC: JAPAN'S ELECTIONS

"JAPAN'S HISTORIC POWER TRANSITION; THE JAPANESE DEMOCRATIC PARTY GOVERNMENT, CAN IT INCREASE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES' CONFIDENCE?"

Conservative Dong-a Ilbo editorialized (08/31): "The Democratic Party favors the idea of free trade agreements with the ROK and the U.S. On North Korea, the Democratic Party of Japan rejects the North as a nuclear power in the same manner as the ROK and the U.S. The cooperation of the international community including the ROK, Japan and the U.S. is crucial in maintaining this principle after Japan's transition of power."

"HOW WILL THE POWER CHANGE IN JAPAN AFFECT KOREA?"

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorialized (08/31): "Yukio Hatoyama, who will be Japan's next prime minister, has stressed the importance of Asia-focused diplomacy, steering away from U.S.-focused diplomacy. Hatoyama, who leads the Democratic Party, said that Japan's diplomacy, up to now, has been tailored to U.S. circumstances but from now on should be on an equal footing with the U.S. Since the cold war era, the U.S.-Japan alliance has served as an axis of Northeast Asia security alongside the ROK-U.S. alliance. There is a likelihood that the U.S.-Japan alliance will change in concert with the ROK-U.S. alliance."

"ELECTION REVOLUTION ENDS LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY ERA IN JAPAN"

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized (08/31): "If Japan intends to speak of an East Asian community, it needs to act as a defender of peace and security in the region. It is common knowledge that it has failed to do so over the years. The country has stirred up insecurity in the region with its historical views, territorial conflicts and military buildup. Japan also has had a deleterious effect on the Six-Party Talks on the North Korean nuclear issue due to its insistence on bringing up citizen abduction issues that are not directly related to the agenda. A solution to the nuclear issue is urgently needed if the East Asian community described by Hatoyama is to be created. In that regard, it is noteworthy that he is opening up the possibility for dialogue with North Korea."

TOKOLA